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UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

REPORT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT IN 2008

Report of the Executive Director

Summary

In line with General Assembly resolution 59/267, this report provides a synopsis of UNFPA management responses to key recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU). In 2008, the JIU issued six reports: these comprise one organization-specific report pertaining to the Universal Postal Union and five reports having cross-organizational impact. In line with the wishes of the Executive Board and the current United Nations emphasis on simplification and harmonization, the present report was prepared in a format jointly developed with UNDP.

Elements of a decision

The Executive Board may wish to take note of the present report, particularly those aspects of the JIU reports that have particular relevance to the work of UNFPA.

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I. OVERVIEW OF JIU REPORTS ISSUED IN 2008

1. Of the six reports issued by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) in 2008 (see list of reports, annex 1), one is specific to an organization other than UNFPA and another report is relevant to UNDP but not to UNFPA. Hence, the recommendations in those two reports are not reviewed in the present report.

2. The four JIU reports that have direct relevance to UNFPA include an assessment of the Junior Professional Officer/Associate Expert/Associate Professional Officer programmes in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2008/2); National execution of technical cooperation projects (JIU/REP/2008/4); Review of information and communication technology (ICT) hosting services in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2008/5); and Review of management of Internet websites in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2008/6).

II. SYNOPSIS AND REVIEW OF RELEVANT JIU REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3. The present chapter reviews the key recommendations of the four relevant reports issued by the JIU in 2008.

A. Junior Professional Officer/Associate Expert/Associate Professional Officer programmes in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2008/2)

4. This report provides an overall assessment of the current situation of the Junior Professional Officer (JPO), Associate Expert, and Associate Professional Officer programmes in the United Nations system organizations, including their legislative basis, rules and regulations and operational practice, and the relevance, effectiveness, and impact of the programme; and recommends measures to improve their political, organizational and operational conditions.

5. The report makes nine recommendations: three are directed to legislative bodies and would need to be reviewed by those bodies; the remaining six recommendations which fall under the purview of UNFPA are accepted by the Fund.

6. UNFPA addresses these six recommendations through its participation in the Human Resources Network which will develop a harmonized JPO policy framework for the United Nations system. UNFPA is already using its performance appraisal and development (PAD) system to monitor supervision, training and learning elements of the JPO programme.

B. National execution of technical cooperation projects (JIU/REP/2008/4)

7. This report reviews the evolution of national execution (NEX) and identification and dissemination of lessons learned and best practices, and related issues including audit, monitoring and evaluation.

8. The report makes 11 recommendations, five are directed to legislative organs and would need to be reviewed by those bodies; the remaining six recommendations which fall under the purview of UNFPA are accepted by the Fund.

9. UNFPA, together with UNDP and other agencies, has been engaged in harmonization of terminology and guidelines for several years and will continue this engagement to simplify and further clarify the terminology and guidelines governing NEX, as recommended in the JIU report.

10. As the JIU report notes, the value of UNFPA resources delivered through NEX has increased in all regions over the period under review. The continued investment by UNFPA in capacity development is seen as a key foundation for growth in the proportion of resources and the effectiveness of the resulting activities implemented through NEX.

C. Review of information and communication technology (ICT) hosting services in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2008/5)

11. This report provides the governing bodies and executive heads of the United Nations system organizations with a comparative study of the main information and communication technology (ICT) hosting services, and identifies best practice used by the United Nations system organizations. The JIU inspectors are of the view that an ICT hosting decision should be based on three important factors, namely, the organizational situation and business demands; ICT governance and ICT strategy; and the consideration of a cost-benefit analysis of each ICT service.

12. The report makes seven recommendations: one is directed to the governing bodies and would need to be reviewed by those bodies; the remaining six recommendations which fall under the purview of UNFPA are accepted by the Fund.

13. UNFPA enterprise resource planning (ERP) is jointly hosted with UNDP and the Fund welcomes the JIU inspectors' finding that this represents a best practice in governance. UNFPA supports strengthening cost-benefit analyses to identify the best options for hosting ICT services in support of the work of the United Nations system organizations.

D. Review of management of Internet websites in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2008/6)

14. This report assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of Internet websites as a communication tool for information dissemination. The report stresses the importance of related issues such as the content management system (CMS), accessibilities and multilingualism.

15. The report makes eight recommendations: two are directed to the governing bodies and would need to be reviewed by those bodies; the remaining six recommendations which fall under the purview of UNFPA are accepted by the Fund.

16. The UNFPA website strategy and policy development continue to evolve and participation in solution-focused United Nations system-wide efforts to harmonize policies would contribute to the Fund's own efforts. UNFPA supports efforts to improve CMS support for the multilingualism that is essential to the work of the United Nations system organizations.

III. STATUS OF UNFPA IMPLEMENTATION OF JIU RECOMMENDATIONS IN 2006-2007

17. In accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/258 requesting the JIU to enhance dialogue with participating organizations and thereby strengthen the follow-up of the implementation of its recommendations, the JIU requested information on the follow-up to recommendations issued in 2005, 2006, and 2007. Annexes 3, 4 and 5 list the 12 JIU reports issued during the period 2005-2007 included in the 2008 follow-up exercise.

18. Of the 114 recommendations issued by JIU during 2005-2007, 78 were directed specifically to funds and programmes, and thus were relevant to UNFPA. Of those relevant to and accepted by UNFPA, all have either been implemented or are being implemented. The remaining recommendations are specifically directed at the General Assembly, the Secretary-General or legislative bodies.

Annex 1: Summary of reports issued by the Joint Inspection Unit in 2008

Report symbol	Name of report	Total recommendations	Relevant to UNFPA	Recommendations directed at the Executive Board
JIU/REP/2008/1	Review of management and administration in the Universal Postal Union (UPU)	12	0	NA
JIU/REP/2008/2	Junior Professional Officer/Associate Expert/Associate Professional Officer programmes in the United Nations system organizations	9	6	NA
JIU/REP/2008/3	Management review of environmental governance within the United Nations system	12	0	NA
JIU/REP/2008/4	National execution of technical cooperation projects	11	6	1
JIU/REP/2008/5	Review of information and communication technology (ICT) hosting services in the United Nations system organizations	6	5	1
JIU/REP/2008/6	Review of management of Internet websites in the United Nations system organizations	8	6	2
Total JIU recommendations in 2008		58	23	4

Annex 2: Relevant JIU recommendations in 2008 for consideration of the Executive Board

JIU recommendations	UNFPA management comments
JIU/REP/2008/4: National execution of technical cooperation projects	
#4: The General Assembly and legislative bodies of corresponding organizations should reiterate that the donors provide less conditioned extrabudgetary contributions, including those financing national execution (NEX), with a view to realizing the priorities of the recipient countries; and ensuring more flexibility, predictability and geographic balance in NEX expenditures.	While reducing conditionality is desirable, UNFPA respects the fact that donors may target particular areas, regions or countries.
JIU/REP/2008/5: Review of information and communication technology (ICT) hosting services in the United Nations system organizations	
#6: The governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request the executive heads to report to their next session on the implementation of the recommendations contained in this report, in particular those recommendations aimed at defining common methodology for ICT costs/expenditures and exploring hosting solutions to take advantage of economies of scale.	Management responses to the JIU recommendations in report 2008/5 are discussed above in paragraph 13 of the present report.
JIU/REP/2008/6: Review of management of Internet websites in the United Nations system organizations	
#6: (a) The governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should establish an ad hoc committee dealing with the implementation of multilingualism on their corporate websites; (b) The governing bodies shall review the report submitted by the ad hoc committee on the measures and financial implications to achieve language parity on their websites and take appropriate action.	The UNFPA corporate website provides content in English, French and Spanish.
#8: The governing bodies of United Nations system organizations should request the executive heads to report to their next session on the implementation of the recommendations contained in this report addressed to the executive heads, in particular those aimed at reforming website governance, updating website strategy and policy, and implementing multilingualism.	Management responses to the JIU recommendations in report 2008/6 are discussed above in paragraph 16 of the present report.

Annex 3: Review of implementation status of relevant JIU recommendations issued in 2007

Report symbol	Name of report	Total recommendations	Relevant to UNFPA	Implemented	Partially implemented
JIU/REP/2007/1	Voluntary contributions in United Nations system organizations: Impact on programme delivery and resource mobilization strategies	7	6	3	3
JIU/REP/2007/2	United Nations system staff medical coverage	7	2	2	NA
JIU/REP/2007/4	Age structure of human resources in the organizations of the United Nations system	8	4	3	1
JIU/REP/2007/6	Knowledge management in the United Nations system	5	2	1	1
JIU/REP/2007/10	Liaison offices in the United Nations system	8	8	2	6
JIU/REP/2007/12	Review of the progress made by the United Nations system organizations in achieving Millennium Development Goal 6, Target 7 to combat HIV/AIDS	11	7	7	NA

Annex 4: Review of implementation status of relevant JIU recommendations issued in 2006

Report symbol	Name of report	Total recommendations	Relevant to UNFPA	Implemented	Partially implemented
JIU/REP/2006/2	Oversight lacunae in the United Nations system	17	10	9	1
JIU/REP/2006/4	A second review of the implementation of headquarters agreements concluded by United Nations system organizations: Provision of headquarters premises and other facilities by host countries	10	0	NA	NA

Annex 5: Review of implementation status of relevant JIU recommendations issued in 2005

Report symbol	Name of report	Total recommendations	Relevant to UNFPA	Implemented	Partially implemented
JIU/REP/2005/2	Some measures to improve overall performance of the United Nations system at country level (Part II)	17	6	6	NA
JIU/REP/2005/3	Policies of United Nations system organizations towards the use of open source software (OSS) in the Secretariats	6	0	NA	NA
JIU/REP/2005/7	Policies of United Nations system organizations towards the use of open source software (OSS) for development	4	0	NA	NA
JIU/REP/2005/8	Further measures to strengthen United Nations system support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)	10	10	10	NA